

JUNE 3, 1964

INTRODUCTION

1. In the foyer of Johns Hopkins University, facing the entrance, stands a marble statue of Jesus. It portrays him leaning forward, arms outstretched as though he were reaching for some wounded, staggering sufferer. On the base of the statue are the words: "COME UNTO ME ALL YE THAT LABOR AND ARE HEAVY LADEN, AND I WILL GIVE YOU REST."
 1. These words have been the text for innumerable sermons.
 2. At some time in life all of us have belonged to the crowd who "labor and are heavy laden!"
 3. This great invitation, perhaps the most appealing invitation that Jesus ever gave, is the center of our thinking and our preaching.

2. The last part of this great invitation states, "For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Matt. 11:30
 1. The yoke of Jesus is so easy when compared with the great yoke that sins lays upon us.

3. This great invitation by Jesus implies certain things. Some suggestions:
 1. It implies that some are under the load of moral distress.
 2. That some are not under such a load because "They mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk, and not faint." Isaiah 40:31
 3. That those who do labor and are heavy laden may have such burdens removed: Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

4. The choice for removal of these burdens and great loads rests with the individual through the ELECTIVES and NON-ELECTIVES OF LIFE. Strictly speaking there is no such thing as electives in the Christian life. All are non-electives: REQUIRED COURSES IN THE UNIVERSITY OF LIFE.

WHAT ARE ELECTIVES...NON-ELECTIVES?

1. In American colleges and universities an elective is a course of study which a student may or may not choose for study. He has a choice.
 1. An elective has no special bearing upon the major or minor for one's degree. The elective is not necessary to secure the degree.
2. On the other hand non-electives (not-electives) are subjects required to the successful completion of the degree sought. You must have them. You have no choice in this field.
3. Strictly speaking there is no such thing as an ELECTIVE in living the Christian life. All courses are non-electives; required and necessary to successful graduation in the field of Christianity.
4. However, for convenience's sake I would like to speak tonight of some electives: things in which you have a choice to do or not to do; the result of your choice in these matters, VERSUS: non-electives: Matters in which you have no choice. First, we will consider some electives:
 1. First, you can choose your way of life. Jesus set this out for us when he said, "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life...Wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction" (Matt. 7:13-14). God will not use his power to thrust us through either of these gates. THE CHOICE IS YOURS! The poet has said :

"But to every man there openeth
A High Way and a Low,
And every man decideth
The way his souls shall go."
 - (1) Though man may so choose, no man has a right to be in the broad way, trampling on the eternal principles of law and order, battling with the moral influences of heaven itself.

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The first part of the great invitation comes, "For ye shall be saved by grace through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." (Eph. 2:8-9)

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WHAT ARE ELECTIVES...NON-ELECTIVES, Continued

2. Second, "What shall I do then with Jesus?" Matthew 27:22. This is an elective! How do you choose in the matter?

- (1) There is no earthly power that can make us choose Jesus and his forgiveness..
- (2) Of our ourselves, we must make the choice. We can choose to pay the penalty of our wickedness or we can choose to accept God's plan for salvation through the blood of his son Jesus. YOU HAVE THE POWER OF CHOICE!

3. Third, we choose our destination. It is heaven or hell, which do you choose?

- (1) We must choose to go in through the "strait" gate to travel in the "narrow" road to life eternal in heaven, or
- (2) We must choose to go in at the "wide" gate to travel in the "broad" way to destruction.
- (3) You are not a victim of some circumstances that have forced you into one of these ways (for you are not in both of them) against your choice. You are in one of these two ways by reason of your choice and determination to travel in that way.
- (4) No one is forcing you to stay in the way whether it is the "narrow" or "broad" way against your wish. You are staying in because you have chosen too.

5. SECOND, we will consider some non-electives: matters in which you have no choice. These are required courses in the university of life.

1. First, there is LIFE itself.

- (1) You did not choose to be born, you were not consulted about living.
- (2) There is not a thing you can do to stop living. You can destroy and wreck the body in which you live and it will return to the dust of the earth, but that soul that God gave to you will keep on living forever.

2. Second, there is DEATH itself. Heb. 9:27

- (1) We cannot bypass death. God's wisdom saw that it would not be good for man to live on earth always.
- (2) One day our long distant call will come, and we will "shuffle off this mortal coil."
- (3) We may as well smile about it as cry. You can cry "your eyes out" and still death will not bypass us. It is a required subject in the university of life.
- (4) Paul thought of death as the coronation day when he said, "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. (7) I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: (8) Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." 2 Tim. 4:6-8

3. Third, REQUIRED in this great school of life is the JUDGMENT BAR OF GOD. "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." Heb. 9:27

- (1) This great truth, REQUIRED COURSE, should make us very still and so careful how we live. Rom. 14:12; So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.
2 Cor. 5:10; For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

OTHER NON-ELECTIVES: TRUTH-HONESTY; GOODNESS TO ALL MEN; LOVE ETC.

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OTHER MEMBERS: [Illegible]

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